

Message Text

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12

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 AID-20 DRC-01 /134 W

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R 012003Z FAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1550

INFO USCINCSO

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

UNCLAS BOGOTA 1793

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CO

SUBJECT: CONTINUING PRESS REACTION TO TLATELOLCO MTG

USCINCSO FOR J-2

1. SINCE WE SENT OUR LAST REACTION ROUNDUP ON MEXICO MTG FONMIN VAZQUEZ RETURNED TO COLOMBIA, RECEIVED A CRITICAL WELCOME FROM NEWSMEN AT THE AIRPORT, DEFENDED THE RESULTS OF THE MTG AND WON THE SUPPORT OF BOGOTA LIBERAL EDITORIAL WRITERS.

2. VAZQUEZ ARRIVED IN BOGOTA ON FEB 27. REPORTERS AT THE AIRPORT BADGERED HIM ABOUT THE LACK OF CONCRETE RESULTS. THEY ASKED WHETHER THE CONFERENCE WAS MERELY A BACK-SLAPPING SESSION AND IF IT WAS NOT TRUE THAT LA HAD HUMBLED ITSELF BEFORE THE U.S.

3. VAZQUEZ REACTED STRONGLY AND MADE SEVERAL POINTS: THE CONFERENCE WAS THE BEGINNING OF LATIN AMERICA EMERGENCE FROM ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE. SECRETARY KISSINGER DID NOT DOMINATE THE CONFERENCE.

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LA WAS NOT HUMILIATED. ON THE CONTRARY, HE SAID, LA FOR THE FIRST TIME ACTED IN CONCERT WHEN DEALING WITH THE U.S. HE AFFIRMED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD TALKED IN CONCRETE TERMS TO HIS COLLEAGUES. WHEN ASKED WHY HE WAS SO CRITICAL OF THE U.S. IN HIS SPEECH AT MEXICO, VAZQUEZ REPLIED, "THE SITUATION IS CRITICAL. MY SPEECH MERELY REFLECTED REALITY".

4. ON MARCH 1 LIBERAL DAILIES EL TIEMPO AND EL ESPECTADOR, THE LARGEST CIRCULATION NEWSPAPERS IN THE COUNTRY, CARRIED MAJOR EDITORIALS DEFENDING VAZQUEZ AND THE CONFERENCE RESULTS. EL TIMEPO SAID THE CONFERENCE WAS A SUCCESS. DR KISSINGERS PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN RESPONSE TO THE LATIN AMERICANS WAS MORE THAN ANYONE COULD HAVE EXPECTED: HE RENEWED THE US COMMITMENT TO THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM AND HA ALSO SAID THAT THE US WOULD NOT IMPOSE ITS POLITICAL PREFERENCES ON THE HEMISPHERE. IN ADDITION, THE US IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE MONETARY SYSTEM, LAW OF THE SEA, FOOD AND POPULATION PROBLEMS THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDED THAT IF THE CONFERENCE SERVED ONLY AS A CATALYST TO AWAKEN LATIN AMERICANS FROM THEIR LETHARGY AND FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIAL PROBLEMS OF HUMANITY, IT WAS WHORTHWILE.

5. THE EL ESPECTADOR EDITORIAL SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH THE MEXICO CONFERENCE DID NOT RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE HEMISPHERE, IT WOULD BE UNJUST TO DISMISS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MTG BECAUSE THERE WAS A SERIOUS AND FRANK XCHANGE BETWEEN THE TWO ZONES OF AMERICA-ONE RICH AND UNITED, THE OTHER POOR AND LACKING INFLUENCE IN WORLD AFFAIRS. BUT THIS TIME THE LATTER ZONE WAS UNITED AND ABLE TO ENGAGE IN A DIALOGUE THAT WILL BEAR FRUIT. INTERAMERICAN HISTORY TELLS US THAT THERE IS REASON FOR PESSIMISM IN THESE MATTERS, BUT KISSINGER HAS SHOWN INTEREST IN LA DESPITE HIS OTHER PREOCCUPATIONS. AT THE MEXICO CONFERENCE THE US DID NOT FLAUNT A BIG STICK, NOR WERE THERE AGGRESSIVE SPEECHES. KSSSINGER DID NOT OFFER MIRACLES, BUT RATHER HE COMMITTED HIMSELF TO TRY TO OBTAIN FROM THE US CONGRESS A NUMBER OF CONCESSIONS OF VITAL INTEREST TO LA.

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Disposition Reason:
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